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ABSTRACT

Described is the EDL "Learning 100" adult-oriented communication skills program used in the Wyandanch community of New York's Suffolk County. Using one full-time reading specialist and two full-time aides, the program divided 100 disadvantaged, minority group junior high school students into 16 sections, each meeting for different lengths of time. Emphasis was given to individual rates of progress, allowing for more flexible groups which gave the students time to ask questions, have their problems resolved, and receive guidance. Diagnosis and evaluation were constant and the students were advanced as soon as they were ready. Although initial student attitudes were negative, by the end of six months their school attendance, classroom behavior, and attitudes had changed, and their reading levels improved substantially--based on the Botel Word Opposite Tests, the average reading gain was 1.3 years. (A detailed chart of individual student reading progress is included.) (HS)

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# Newsletter
## EDL/McGraw-Hill

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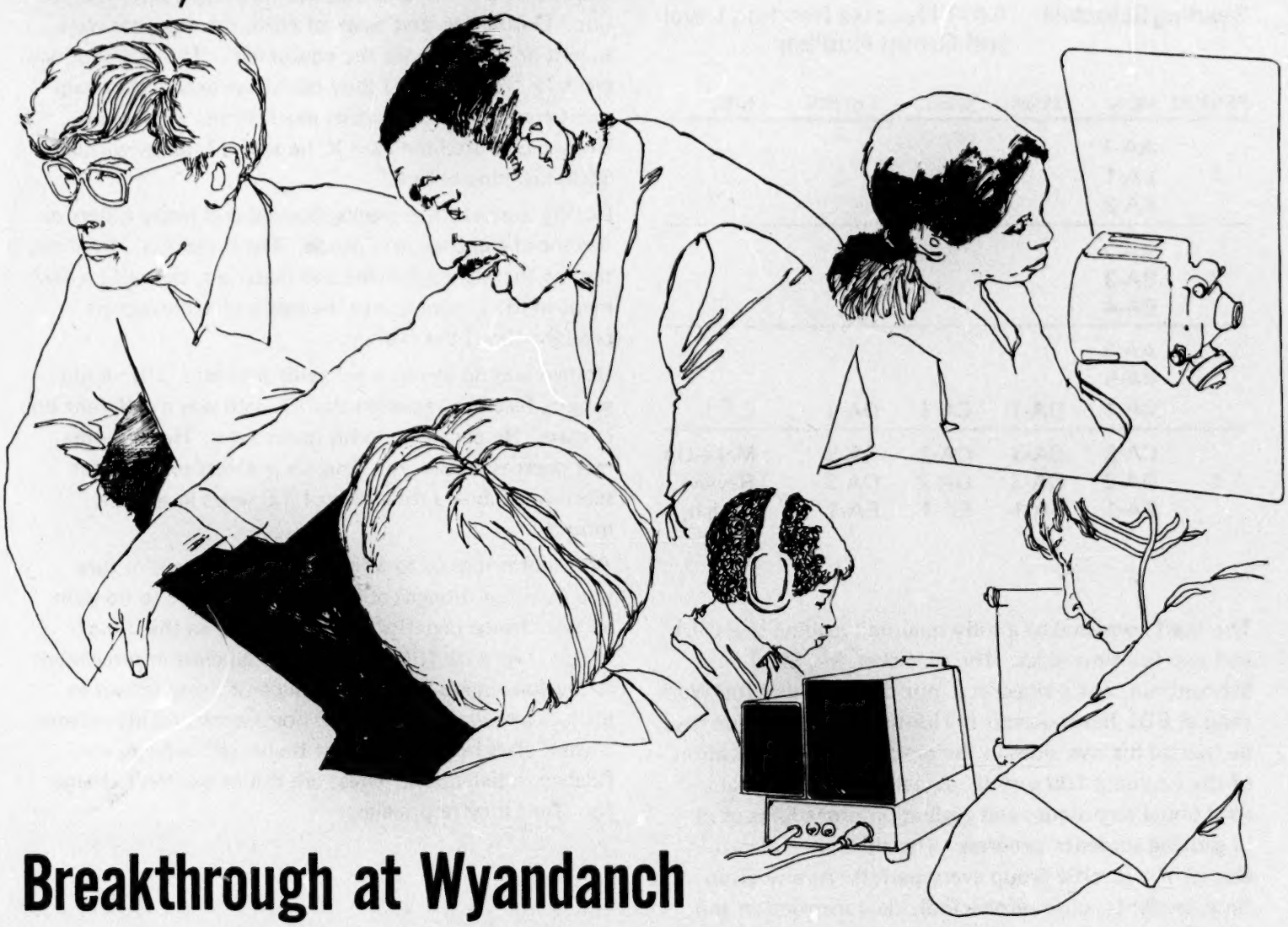

# Breakthrough at Wyandanch

Wyandanch, a small, changing community in Suffolk County, New York, is a microcosm of every major school system in the United States.

Plagued by more than its share of racial and educational problems, Wyandanch emerged from the long, hot, racially tense summer of 1969 with the realization that improvement had to be made in the educational programs for disadvantaged minority groups. These students, who formed a large segment of the total school population, needed an individualized reading program that would not "talk down to them" and yet could let them grow from the low levels of achievement they had experienced in the past. The answer was a decision to use EDL's *Learning 100* adult-oriented communication skills system for students in Wyandanch Junior High School.

During late 1969 and early 1970, what was once an impossible dream came true. Student reading levels improved markedly. Children's attitudes changed from negative to positive. Classroom behavior, interest, and degree of involvement became noticeably better.

About 100 students were selected for instruction with the *Learning 100* system. All students reading on levels 1-3 were chosen, as well as sample groups from levels 4-6. At the end of six months, based on *Botel Word Opposite Tests,* the average reading gain of the participating students was a grade level unit of 1.3 years.

Students were divided into sixteen groups of six children each. Three groups worked in the Reading Center at one time. Eight groups received instruction five days per week, one group received instruction three days a week, and the remaining seven groups received instruction two days weekly. The Reading Center operated on the standard Wyandanch period length of 45 minutes, four periods each day.

Students in first- and second-grade reading levels (AA & BA groups) attended the Center five days weekly. Some



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students in the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth levels received instruction twice weekly, although one low third-level group attended three times a week. By staggering the groups more children could be accommodated in the lab, and those with the most need could receive the most intensive instruction. (See Chart No. 1.)

## CHART NO. 1

### Reading Schedule – AA-1 Denotes Reading Level and Group Number

| PERIOD | MON. | TUES. | WED. | THURS. | FRI. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | AA-1<br>BA-1<br>BA-2 | | | | |
| 2 | AA-2<br>BA-3<br>BA-4 | | | | |
| 3 | AA-3<br>BA-5<br>CA-1 | DA-1 | CA-1 | DA-1 | CA-1 |
| 4 | CA-2<br>DA-2<br>EA-1 | CA-3<br>DA-3<br>FA-1 | CA-2<br>DA-2<br>EA-1 | CA-3<br>DA-3<br>FA-1 | Make-Up<br>Review<br>Enrichment |

The staff consisted of a fully qualified reading specialist, and two full-time aides. The specialist, Mr. Stephen A. Schoenbrun, was trained in a four-day *Learning 100* Workshop at EDL headquarters in Huntington. Subsequently, he trained his two aides in the procedures and operation of the *Learning 100* system, as well as in the special instructional techniques and evaluation procedures used in gauging students' progress. The aides were placed in charge of a specific group every period. At any given time, students could receive individual instruction and guidance, ask questions, have their problems resolved.

The reading groups were considered flexible, and not necessarily permanent. Diagnosis and evaluation was constant, and as soon as a student was ready, he was advanced. Weekly staff meetings were held for work review and progress reports.

Initially, student attitudes toward the Reading Center were negative. However, as soon as they were exposed to the materials and equipment and began to use them, attitudes began to change. After several weeks, when students could recognize their own progress, attitudes became very positive. The *Learning 100* system held their interest throughout, and many did not want the program to end.

Perhaps the greatest accomplishment of the *Learning 100* system in Wyandanch was to prove to students that learning to read is no impossible dream. The accompanying Chart No. 2 indicates this, listing the pretest and posttest scores of 101 Wyandanch Junior High students. The case of Donald, one of the students, is typical. At the start of the program, Donald was very negative. He felt he could read well enough, and wanted no part of a reading class. He was loud, boisterous, and antagonistic. His pretest reading level score was second grade.

The approach used with Donald was the same as that used with the other students. He was made to feel that the course was his, and that the Reading Center was for him. During the first week of class, the students were taught how to operate the equipment. The response was electric. The fact that they could use expensive equipment created almost instant motivation. And when Donald operated the Aud-X, he said, "I never worked a $500 machine before."

During the next few weeks, Donald and many others experienced a change in attitude. The individual attention, the fascinating equipment and materials, the self-involvement in the program, and the sense of achievement brought about the change.

Donald was no longer a behavior problem. His various subject teachers reported that Donald was a different boy in class. He began to do his homework. His absentee rate decreased sharply. And his posttest reading test score was 3.5 – a total gain of 1.5 years in just six months.

And that brings us to a final point, which we're sure you've often thought about yourself. It has to do with all the "fringe benefits" which spin off in the use of EDL's *Learning 100* system: The all-class improvement it develops in students; the changes it brings about in attitudes toward self, toward homework and attendance, toward class behavior; how it builds self-esteem, confidence, satisfaction. These are things we don't charge for. And they're priceless.

## CHART NO. 2

### Results of Reading Tests

| STUDENT NO. | BOTEL FORM A PRETEST (NOV. 1969) | BOTEL FORM B POSTTEST (JUNE 1970) | TIMES ABSENT | TIMES LATE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | Absent | 36 | 2 |
| 2 | 1 | 3.5 | 23 | 3 |
| 3 | 1 | 2 | 32 | – |
| 4 | 1 | 2 | 18 | 6 |
| 5 | 1 | 2 | 13 | – |
| 6 | 2 | 3.5 | 23 | 3 |
| 7 | 2 | Absent | 55 | – |
| 8 | 1 | 3 | 50 | 2 |
| 9 | 2 | 3.5 | 16 | 4 |
| 10 | 2 | 6 | 7 | 4 |
| 11 | 3 | 3.5 | 24 | 2 |
| 12 | 2 | 3.5 | 36 | 1 |
| 13 | 2.5 | 3.5 | 58 | 0 |
| 14 | 2 | 3.5 | 27 | 1 |
| 15 | 2 | 3.5 | 15 | 1 |
| 16 | 2 | 3.5 | 22 | 2 |
| 17 | 2 | 3.5 | 14 | – |
| 18 | 1 | 2.5 | 14 | 3 |
| 19 | 1 | 2.5 | 48 | 3 |
| 20 | 1 | 3.5 | 12 | 2 |
| 21 | 1 | 1 | 14 | – |
| 22 | 1 | 3.5 | 15 | – |
| 23 | 2 | 2.5 | 10 | 1 |
| 24 | 5 | 5 | 1 | – |
| 25 | 5 | 6 | 3 | – |
| 26 | 5 | 5 | 15 | – |
| 27 | 3.5 | 4 | 16 | 4 |
| 28 | 5 | 5 | 11 | 1 |
| 29 | 5 | 6 | 22 | – |
| 30 | 5 | 6 | 20 | – |
| 31 | 5 | 5 | 22 | – |
| 32 | 3.5 | 4 | 16 | – |
| 33 | 3 | 3.5 | 6 | – |
| 34 | 2 | 4 | 15 | – |
| 35 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3 | – |
| 36 | 3 | 4 | 13 | – |
| 37 | 2 | 3.5 | 47 | – |
| 38 | 3.5 | Absent | 24 | 3 |
| 39 | 2 | 3 | 25 | – |
| 40 | 4 | 6 | 14 | 1 |
| 41 | 4 | 4 | 11 | – |
| 42 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 1 |
| 43 | 4 | 4 | 12 | 1 |
| 44 | 4 | 6 | 8 | – |
| 45 | 3 | 5 | 25 | – |
| 46 | 3 | 4 | 4 | – |
| 47 | 2.5 | 3 | 3 | – |
| 48 | 3 | 5 | 4 | – |
| 49 | 3 | 4 | 7 | – |
| 50 | 3 | 4 | 3 | – |
| 51 | 3 | Absent | 4 | – |
| 52 | 3 | 4 | – | – |
| 53 | 3 | 4 | 7 | 1 |
| 54 | 3 | 5 | 2 | – |
| 55 | 3 | 4 | 6 | – |
| 56 | 3 | 4 | 4 | – |
| 57 | 3 | 4 | 6 | – |
| 58 | 5 | 6 | 10 | – |
| 59 | 5 | 5 | 13 | – |
| 60 | 5 | 6 | 23 | 1 |
| 61 | 5 | 6 | 8 | – |
| 62 | 5 | 6 | 4 | – |
| 63 | 5 | 5 | 10 | – |
| 64 | 5 | 6 | 10 | – |
| 65 | 3 | 5 | 1 | – |
| 66 | 4 | 6 | 4 | – |
| 67 | 4 | 4 | 21 | – |
| 68 | 4 | 6 | 18 | – |
| 69 | 4 | Absent | 18 | – |
| 70 | 4 | 4 | 19 | – |
| 71 | 6 | 6 | 5 | – |
| 72 | 6 | Absent | 7 | – |
| 73 | 4 | 4 | 13 | – |
| 74 | 1 | 1 | 24 | 2 |
| 75 | 2 | 3 | 24 | – |
| 76 | 2 | 3.5 | 3 | – |
| 77 | 2.5 | 3 | 6 | – |
| 78 | 2 | 2 | 3 | – |
| 79 | 2 | 3.5 | 22 | 1 |
| 80 | 2 | Absent | 34 | – |
| 81 | 2 | 3 | 39 | – |
| 82 | 2 | 4 | 22 | 3 |
| 83 | 2 | 3.5 | 29 | – |
| 84 | 2 | 2 | 29 | – |
| 85 | 2 | 5 | 7 | – |
| 86 | 2.5 | 6 | 15 | – |
| 87 | 1 | 4 | 27 | 9 |
| 88 | 2.5 | 4 | 19 | – |
| 89 | 3 | 4 | 32 | 1 |
| 90 | 3 | Absent | 30 | – |
| 91 | 3 | Absent | 16 | 1 |
| 92 | 3 | Absent | 25 | – |
| 93 | 3 | Junior High | 6 | – |
| 94 | 3 | 4 | 28 | – |
| 95 | 3 | 3 | 1 | – |
| 96 | 3 | 3.5 | 13 | – |
| 97 | 6 | Junior High | 2 | – |
| 98 | 6 | Junior High | 1 | – |
| 99 | 6 | Senior High | 3 | – |
| 100 | 6 | Junior High | 3 | – |
| 101 | 2 | 3.5 | 1 | – |

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